

DESCRIPTION

The Salinas River, which originates in San Luis Obispo County, flows northwestward into Monterey County and continues through the entire length of the Salinas Valley. Urbanization, flood control activities, hydromodification of creeks, and mining of sand, gravel, mineral and oil reserves from various locations throughout the watershed are also impacting water resources within the watershed.

Agriculture is the dominant land use throughout the Salinas watershed, and has had serious impacts on water resources. As a result of overpumping for irrigation, seawater has intruded nearly six miles inland in the Castroville area and necessitated abandonment of several water supply wells. Additionally, nitrate contamination is widespread throughout the Salinas Valley Groundwater Basin and has been found at high levels in surface water as well.

Urbanization in many areas of the watershed is resulting in increased runoff volumes, velocities, and pollutant levels. The upper Salinas land changes are characterized by increased urbanization along the Salinas River and U.S. 101 corridors, and the proliferation of ranchettes and irrigated crops in surrounding lands. The lower Salinas land changes involve conversion of agricultural land to urban development, and more intensive irrigated farming. Urbanization involves increasing impervious surfaces (paving, buildings), which interrupts the natural cycle of gradual percolation and cleansing of water through vegetation and soil. Instead, water is collected and routed to drainage systems where large volumes of untreated runoff quickly flow to the nearest receiving water. The effects of this process include streambank scouring, sediment deposition, and downstream flooding.



Mouth of Salinas River

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REASON FOR CCA IDENTIFICATION

The Salinas River was one of the original CCAs identified in 1995 as an **impaired waterbody that flows into an estuary**.

POLLUTED RUNOFF CONDITIONS

Selected Coastal Zone Waterbodies	Top 5 Runoff Pollutants of Concern					Efforts to Address Pollutants (See next page)
	<u>2002 303(d)-Listed Pollutants</u>					
	TMDL Priority (& Proposed Completion if available)					
	<u>Fecal Coliform</u>	<u>Nutrients</u>	<u>Pesticides</u>	<u>Salinity/ TDS/ Chlorides</u>	<u>Sediment</u>	
Salinas River, Lower ▲	▲ Low	▲ Medium	▲ Medium	▲ Low	▲ Medium	
Blanco Drain ■			■ Medium			
Potential Sources of Pollutants in Coastal Waterbodies						
Agriculture		▲	▲ ■	▲	▲	
➤ Crop Production			▲ ■		▲	
➤ Agricultural Storm Runoff			▲ ■		▲	
➤ Irrigation Tailwater			▲ ■			
➤ Agricultural Return Flows			▲ ■			
➤ Range Grazing					▲	
Forestry (Silviculture)						

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Potential sources of Pollutants, continued	Fecal Coliform	Nutrients	Pesticides	Salinity/ TDS/ Chlorides	Sediment	Efforts to Address Pollutants
Urban Areas						a, b
➤ Road Construction					▲	
➤ Land Development					▲	
Marinas & Boating						
Hydromodification						c
➤ Channel Erosion					▲	
Wetlands & Riparian Areas						a, c
Unspecified Nonpoint Source			▲ ■	▲	▲	a
Natural Sources				▲		
Source Unknown	▲					

MAJOR EFFORTS TO IMPLEMENT NPS MANAGEMENT MEASURES

a) California State University Monterey Bay Watershed Institute	http://watershed.csumb.edu/index.html	
	Doug Smith	(831) 582-4696 douglas_smith@csumb.edu
➤ Direct action community-based coalition of researchers, restoration ecologist, educators, planners, students, and volunteers, who work to promote and employ a systems approach to management of watersheds around the world.		
b) Chualar Creek Pilot Project Water Quality Monitoring	http://science.csumb.edu/~ccows/2003/chualar/Chualar.htm	
Chualar Creek Watershed Working Group	Kelly Huff	(831) 477-0272 khuff@surfneta.com
➤ This project was a pilot monitoring project - ahead of a more widespread current effort to provide water quality monitoring support to the Watershed Working Groups of California's Central Coast.		
c) Upper Salinas Watershed Coalition	http://www.us-ltrcd.com/	
	Donald (DJ) Funk	(805) 434-0396 don.funk@ca.usda.gov
➤ In collaboration with the Planning and Conservation League Foundation and the California Conservation Corps, implementing the Upper Salinas River Enhancement Project covering about 6 miles of the river and tributaries.		

REGULATORY/PLANNING JURISDICTIONS

➤ Monterey County Water Resources Agency	http://www.mcwra.co.monterey.ca.us/	Manuel Quezada	(831) 755-4874	quezadam@co.monterey.ca.us
➤ Calif. Coastal Commission, Water Quality Unit	http://www.coastal.ca.gov/nps/npsndx.html	Ross Clark	(831) 427-4873	rclark@coastal.ca.gov
➤ Central Coast Regional Water Quality Control Board	http://www.waterboards.ca.gov/centralcoast/	Amanda Bern	(805) 594-6197	abern@waterboards.ca.gov
➤ State Water Resources Control Board	http://www.swrcb.ca.gov/v/	Steve Fagundes	(916) 341-5487	sfagundes@waterboards.ca.gov
➤ California Coastal Conservancy	http://www.coastalconservancy.ca.gov/	Terri Nevins	(510) 286-4161	tnevins@scc.ca.gov
➤ Calif. Dept. of Fish & Game, Marine Region	http://www.dfg.ca.gov/	Kevin Urquhart	(831) 649-2882	kurquhart@dfg.ca.gov
➤ Calif. State Parks, Monterey District	http://www.parks.ca.gov/v/parkindex/region_info.asp?regiontab=0&id=6	Tom Moss	(831) 649-2854	tmoss@parks.ca.gov

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